

# On the Horizon



Summer/Fall 2020 Edition

[www.horizonwings.org](http://www.horizonwings.org)

Welcome to Horizon Wings' semi-annual newsletter – On the Horizon. We would like to keep you informed of happenings, events, and news going on at Horizon Wings.

Our mission at Horizon Wings is to rehabilitate birds of prey for release into the wild, in order to maintain their population and to educate the community to enhance awareness of the environment. It is our hope by doing this that we reach people of all ages and create the desire in them to help preserve our natural world.

## Eaglet Rescue

June 4th proved to be a long and busy day. Volunteers Jeanne and Sandy were out kayaking and fishing when they got a phone call from Mary-Beth about an injured eaglet on a remote island in Northeast CT. A plan needed to be made immediately to help this young raptor. A canoe big enough to hold the eagle's crate had to be secured, coordination with DEEP to open a gate on a dirt access road needed to be finalized, and a truck to drive the canoe in about a mile to get to the lake needed to be secured as well. Also, we needed to get a couple of folks to actually paddle out and then rescue the bird.

Mary-Beth wasn't able to go, since she was on her way to release a young peregrine falcon in the opposite direction within the state. Jeanne and Sandy jumped at the idea of helping with this rescue, because this was a nest that they had been watching for the last several years. Hence, they were very well acquainted with the birds and the area. Fortunately, they were able to get Jeanne's father's truck and pick up a canoe at a friend's house on the way to the park. The DEEP had the gate unlocked, which allowed them to drive in the woods to the pond. Then the long paddle to the other end of the lake began. The paddle was a mile long in some very hot weather, but the two volunteers didn't notice the heat or the long paddle. They were just focused on getting to the nest island.

Once they got to the island, they saw that the nest was no longer in the tree. It must have been blown down in a storm, which meant the eaglets came down too. One eaglet was fine, but the other was on the ground at the back of the island. Now the trick was to rescue this eaglet without it going into the water. Fortunately, this actually proved to be easier than expected. The eaglet let Jeanne approach and put a blanket over it to secure it without much struggle. It was obvious that there was a bad wing injury and this bird needed immediate medical assistance. They were able to get the bird loaded into a crate in the canoe and paddled out without any issues. Then Jeanne's father drove another vehicle to meet them so they could transfer the eaglet out of the back of the pickup into a SUV to drive to Horizon Wings.



*Photo by Sandy Vinton*

Mary-Beth was now home from the peregrine release, and was ready with fluids and pain and anti-inflammatory medications, along with bandage materials for the eaglet's arrival. The eaglet was stabilized for the night and was driven up to Tufts for further evaluation and treatment the next day. It was determined that it had a fracture of the humerus in the wing. They weren't able to do surgery, since it was an older injury, but fortunately the fracture was nicely aligned and all they needed to do was bandage it. The bird then spent 7 weeks at Tufts being rehabilitated. It also spent time in the large flight aviary, making sure that was ready for flight and survival in the wild. Finally it got the sign-off and was ready for release.



*Photo by Sandy Vinton*

Plans were made to pick up the bird from Tufts, get it banded by the DEEP bander, Brian Hess, and then release it back on the island. The canoe and truck were again secured. On July 22, Mary Beth, along with some Horizon Wings volunteers, DEEP workers, and members from The Last Green Valley, successfully released this bird.

But this is not the end of the story. Two days later, Jeanne and Sandy were able to kayak to the island and spotted the bird both perching and flying just fine. Because this eagle was now banded, Jeanne and Sandy could clearly see the bands and confirm that it was, indeed, our eaglet.

But the most exciting part of this eagle's story happened just 16 days after it's release. This bird was sighted and photographed in Maine – 270 miles away from where it was released! What an amazing journey for this young bird! Here's hoping for a successful life in the wild. This is why we do what we do.

Huge thanks to all involved in this rescue and release: Tufts Wildlife Clinic; the DEEP; the Last Green Valley; the photographer that reported the band in ME; the person that reported seeing the eaglet injured, the volunteers with Horizon Wings; and Jeanne's father. Sometimes it truly does take a village!

*Written by Jeanne Wadsworth*



*Photo by Jim Whitney*

## Projects of 2020

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic this year, we are happy to report that we were able to complete some significant projects at Horizon Wings.

Our biggest accomplishment this year was the installation of a complete security system, with cameras monitoring the grounds to ensure everyone's safety. This was installed by Alan Mackenzie with the help of some of the Horizon Wings volunteers.

Recently completed was a much-needed refurbishment of Skywalker, the Golden Eagle's, aviary. In addition to replacing beams on the roof, we rebuilt his nest box so that he will stay warmer for winter. Old perches in all of the aviaries were also replaced.

We rebuilt our smallest 6'x8' aviary to better accommodate small birds for rehabilitation. We also completed a reorganization of both the new rehab shed and also another shed, to ensure that we maximize storage space for the birds' travel boxes, as well as providing optimal space for birds in rehabilitation.

In addition to these projects benefiting our resident birds and rehabilitation birds, we were able to further enhance our grounds for future visitors. Even more plantings and beautiful garden areas were added. Recently, volunteers from Pfizer did a wonderful job of helping with a major seasonal clean-up of the grounds.

We are very fortunate to have met some of our goals this year, especially during these difficult times. These things are not accomplished without dedication and perseverance. Thanks you to all who have made this possible and to all those in the Horizon Wings family who continue to support our efforts. We are blessed.



*Written by Patricia Caberelli*

# The Topic of Euthanasia

What is euthanasia? The word euthanasia comes from 2 Greek terms. “Eu”, meaning good, and “thantos”, meaning death. It is usually used to describe the ending of life in a way that minimizes both pain and distress for an animal.

All wildlife rehabilitators face this decision, usually multiple times during their career. It is a decision one does not come to or take lightly. It is a decision that should always be made with the advice and help of a veterinarian who will perform the procedure.

Sometimes the decision is obvious, by the extent of an animal’s injury and/or their pain and suffering. Other times it is not as obvious. There are times when an animal can survive its injury and perhaps live a life in captivity as an educational ambassador, or as a foster parent. Unfortunately, not all animals are meant for this life. Many are too stressed and not happy in captivity. They don’t eat well, or perhaps sit in one corner of a cage depressed, pacing, and throwing themselves up against the walls of their enclosures. Not all animals will thrive in captivity, and as wildlife rehabilitators, we need to be able to recognize this. We owe it to them to end their lives as peacefully and painlessly as possible.



Photo by Sandy Vinton

The following statements are standards of care from The National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association and from the International Wildlife Rehabilitators Council.

[https://www.nrawildlife.org/page/Rehabilitators\\_Code/Wildlife-Rehabilitators-Code-of-Ethics.html](https://www.nrawildlife.org/page/Rehabilitators_Code/Wildlife-Rehabilitators-Code-of-Ethics.html)

*A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to provide professional and humane care in all phases of wildlife rehabilitation, protecting the welfare, respecting the wildness, and maintaining the dignity of each animal in life and in death. Releasable animals should be maintained in a wild condition and released as soon as appropriate. Non-releasable animals have a right to euthanasia.*

<https://theiwrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Standards-4th-Ed-2012-final.pdf>

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Written by Mary-Beth Kaeser

## Special Thanks

We wish to thank all our donors, sponsors, and veterinarians that made it possible to continue through these trying times.

### Donations

Vaughn and Sheila Numrych  
Charles River Laboratory  
Envigo Laboratory  
Jackson Laboratory

### Grants

The Connecticut Freemasons  
Connecticut Ornithological Association  
Pfizer  
Katherine L.W. and Winthrop M. Crane, 3D Charitable Foundation  
Oxbow Enterprises

### Veterinarians

Tufts Wildlife Clinic  
North Veterinary Clinic  
Bolton Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Anne Burke  
Kensington Bird & Animal Hospital.

Thank you to all the dedicated and hardworking volunteers that help to keep Horizon Wings running on a day to day basis. I couldn't do it without you!

Mary-Beth Kaeser

## Wish List

- Lumber (Plywood, 2x4s, 2x6s)
- Roofing material
- Hardware (deck screws, rafter hangers, hinges, hasps)
- Pea stone for aviary flooring
- Zip-Loc freezer bags
- Cleaning supplies (paper towels, bleach, Simple Green)
- Office supplies (Postage stamps, paper, envelopes, card stock)
- Gift cards for building supplies
- Hardware cloth
- Disposable vinyl cleaning gloves
- Amazon  
([https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/U6FQBKMX03M/ref=cm\\_go\\_nav\\_hz](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/U6FQBKMX03M/ref=cm_go_nav_hz))

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